

# STODDARD NEWSLETTER

VOLUME V, ISSUE I

SUMMER, 2013

## STODDARD COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT



## 2013 GENERAL CRP SIGNUP

Scott James- Quail Forever Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist, Stoddard and Scott Counties  
Zac Eddy – Pheasants Forever Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist, Central Kansas

### Available Cost Share Practices

- Vegetative Cover
- Diversions
- Woodland Protection
- Grazing Systems
- Ponds
- Drop Pipes
- Underground Pipe
- Irrigation Systems
- Well Decommissioning
- Field Borders
- Sod Waterway
- No-till Systems

When the 2008 Farm Bill was given an extension as part of the “fiscal cliff” deal in January, those of us outside of the Washington Beltway were given few details about how the extension would impact producers and conservation programs. One bright spot in the extension was confirmation that the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) was reauthorized to accept applications for new acres. CRP is one of the most successful programs in the USDA portfolio—both in terms of environmental benefits and as a consistent source of income to landowners enrolled in the program. According to the Missouri Dept. of Conservation’s Farm Bill coordinator, Lisa Potter, there are over 177,000 acres worth of contracts set to expire statewide in September 2013 (4,670 ac. in Stoddard County) and not opening enrollment could have been damaging to struggling wildlife populations and the economy.

On February 16<sup>th</sup>, speculation was put to rest when USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that both Continuous and General CRP applications would be accepted in 2013. Continuous CRP allows for the year-round enrollment of acres with the highest value to conservation and guarantees acceptance if offered acres meet criteria, while the more traditional and competitive General CRP allows landowners to offer whole or partial-field enrollment of cropland acres. General CRP offers are then ranked nationally, and the best applications are accepted into the program. This General Sign-up application period will be from May 20-June 14.

Another important announcement that Secretary Vilsack made is that a national review of Soil Rental Rates was held to potentially make CRP payments more competitive with commodity markets and land values. Soil Rental Rates (SRR) are per-acre payments based on common local cash rent rates and predicted soil productivity. Landowners with CRP contracts are then paid an annual rental payment based on the SRRs of the ground they have enrolled. The Stoddard County average rental rate was reviewed and finalized at \$97.33 per acre. Landowners should know that this SRR is higher than their rental rate was upon enrollment 10 years ago. Information about the options of General CRP and Continuous CRP follows.

Rankings for General CRP are calculated based on factors called the Environmental Benefits Index (EBI). Generally, the easiest way to improve a ranking is to apply for practices that provide higher plant diversity. For example, applying for a CP1 (Establishment of Introduced Grasses and Legumes) contract will result in a lower EBI score than an application for CP2 (Establishment of Native Grasses and Broad-leaves) combined with a CP42 (Pollinator Habitat) and/or CP12 (Food Plot) block. That is because CP1 is a more “barebones” (lower plant diversity) practice consisting of non-native plants that do not replicate natural grassland communities as well as CP2 and CP42. This year’s signup will probably not be highly competitive, but diverse cover practices with higher points help wildlife and resource concerns.

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## 2013 Poster Contest Winners

The Stoddard County Soil & Water Conservation District hosts a poster contest for the fourth graders in the county each year. This year there were 327 students participating.

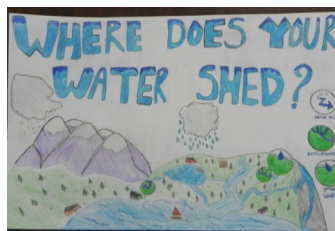
The theme for 2013 was "Where Does Your Water Shed?". The students were challenged to think about how the rainwater runs during a storm. Many students had never thought about how the raindrops that fall here could flow to the Gulf of Mexico. The posters this year did a good job showing their under-

standing of the process. First place winners from each school were awarded a \$10 gift card. They were as follows:



**Ryder Boles, Dexter**

**Stoddard County 2nd Place**



**Molly Murphy, Dexter**

**Stoddard County 1st Place**

Advance.....Alyssa Miles

Bell City.....Wyatt Griffin

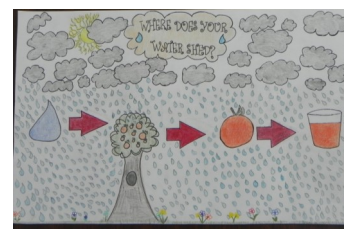
Bloomfield.....Hunter Martin

Dexter.....Ryder Boles

Puxico....Kendall Armstrong

Richland.....Lilly Morrison

County winner's posters that are pictured here were sent on to the state competition. They were awarded gift cards of \$50, \$30 and \$20.



**Kendall Armstrong, Puxico**

**Stoddard County 3rd Place**

### Well Decommissioning Money Available

We need your help in getting the word out! Do you have or know of old wells that are not in use any longer?

Wells that are in disrepair or have not been used for a period of two years are considered abandoned. Plugging abandoned wells is the responsibility of the landowner. An abandoned drilled well can introduce contaminants into

the groundwater system, and may be responsible for contaminating your water supply, and that of your neighbors.

Our office can cost-share to plug wells. Instructions will be given to you so that it is performed in accordance with regulations. If you have any questions, please give us a call at (573) 624-5939, ext 3.

### WOMEN IN AG TOUR STODDARD COUNTY

The University of Missouri Extension Center will provide an educational program for women who are currently involved in farming practices or considering a farm enterprise. The morning program will include Jim Tweedy talking about Budget and Estate Management, and Michelle Gross talking about conservation planning. The Indian Hills Winery, owned by

Marty & Nicole Sifford, will be toured prior to having lunch there. The first stop after lunch will be to tour Away 2 Me Farms, owned by Debbie George. The final stop of the day will be the R & J Berry Farm owned by Ron Christian. **Tuesday, June 11, 2013 - 8 am at NRCS Office, Dexter** Pre-register by calling the University of Missouri Extension at (573) 686-8064.

## Equipment Rental Rates

### 7 Ft John Deere Disk

\$50.00 Half Day  
\$100.00 Overnight

**NEW!!**



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**10 Ft John Deere No-Till Drill with Legume Box**

In-County: \$12.00 per acre  
Minimum Charge of \$100.00  
Deposit: \$100.00

### 10 Ft Truax Warm Season Grass Drill

In-County: \$12.00 per acre  
Minimum Charge of \$100.00  
Deposit: \$100.00



**Straw Blower (Mulcher)**

\$50.00 Half Day  
\$75.00 Full Day

## CRP Sign-up, continued

If landowners are less interested in General CRP and are more interested in directly supporting specific resources (e.g. wild-life) while earning an additional incentive, they should consider Continuous CRP. As referenced earlier, Continuous CRP allows for the non-competitive, year-round enrollment of acres with the highest value to conservation. A few options there include the CP9 and CP23 "shallow wetland" programs, CP33 habitat buffers for upland birds, and the CP38 "state acres for wildlife enhancement" programs. Many of these programs offer signup incentive payments and additional cost-share for establishment.

Finally, if landowners are concerned with CRP maintenance issues, consider a CP3A (Hardwood Tree Planting) program. This General CRP program establishes hardwood trees and is ideal for land on Crowley's Ridge. Although maintenance is needed the first few years, there is no mid-contract management requirement, unlike many other CRP practices.

Remember that landowners have more options than those mentioned here. There are many different conservation practices and enhancements they can use to make a competitive bid in General CRP or to avoid CRP altogether. Other conservation programs include practices which reduce soil erosion, enhance wildlife habitat, and improve water quality. These can also be an excellent, alternative source of income. If you would like to learn more about all Farm Bill programs, about CRP and the application/ranking processes, as well as ways to improve existing CRP stands for wildlife, help is available. Local USDA offices are hosting three CRP workshops with dates and locations below. Additionally, you can contact me (Scott James) at 545-3593 x 112 or Brandon Wirsig (with the MO Dept. of Conservation) at 624-5939 x 136 for assistance.

## CRP WORKSHOPS

**Stoddard County**  
**Dexter's USDA Service Center**  
 Wednesday, June 12  
 1:00-4:00 (field workshop)

We will meet briefly at the Dexter USDA Service Center before leaving for Field Tour

**Cape Girardeau County**  
 Tuesday, May 21  
 6:00-8:30  
 Cape Girardeau MDC Regional Office

**Scott County**  
 Thursday, May 30  
 2:00-4:30  
 Benton USDA Service Center

*The Stoddard County  
 cost-share dollars spent  
 for conservation  
 practices are funded  
 through the 1 / 10 of  
 1% Missouri Parks,  
 Soils and Water Tax .*

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## FISCAL YEAR 2013 COST-SHARE

The Stoddard County Soil & Water Conservation District will end Fiscal Year 2013 by paying almost \$500,000 to landowners to complete conservation practices on their land. The number of practices completed and the total cost-share amounts are as follows:

Drought Assistance	42	\$267,312.72
Dry Structure	1	\$ 10,000.00
Drop Pipes	37	\$ 71,517.73
Well Decommissioning	1	\$ 400.00
Underground Pipe	19	\$132,661.90
Surge Valves	8	\$ 6,579.30
Pivot Renozzle	1	<u>\$ 2,732.40</u>
		\$491,529.10

*Congratulations  
 are in order!!!*

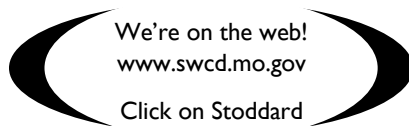
Shane Bess has been promoted as the new District Conservationist for Bollinger, Wayne and Madison counties. He started his new duties on April 22, 2013.



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Dexter, MO 63841

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Fax: 573-624-7509

**CONSERVING OUR  
RESOURCES FOR FUTURE  
GENERATIONS!**



### **Board of Supervisors**

Chairman: Jim Stuever  
Vice-Chairman: Clint Stephens  
Treasurer: Gary Deardorff  
Secretary: Van Ayers  
Member: Allen Below

### **District Staff**

District Manager: Janet Johns  
District Technician II: Joshua Lemmons  
District Technician II: Tyler Moore

### **NRCS Staff**

District Conservationist: Michelle Gross  
Soil Conservation Tech: Ryan McFarlen  
Soil Conservation Tech: Kurt LeBeau  
Soil Conservation Tech: Brittany Bollinger  
Office Automation Clerk: Erin Dissler



## **Dates to Remember**

Office Closed  
Memorial Day—May 27  
July 4  
Labor Day—September 2

**Check out current up-  
dates on our website at**  
**[www.swcd.mo.gov](http://www.swcd.mo.gov)**

**Click on Stoddard  
County**